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ABSTRACT

This paper attempts to develop a conceptual framework for describing the school as an organization. In the first chapter, after a review of organizational theory and research on the school, it is concluded that the school organization as a whole can be described in terms of bureaucracy and professionalism. In the second chapter, two basic assumptions are defended. The first is that the school is (and must be) a hierarchical organization and the second is that the school is (and must be) an organization characterized at all levels by structural conflict. The third chapter presents preliminary concepts for describing the complex school organization. It looks at the school as a coercive, professional, and bureaucratic organization. The last chapter outlines the rationalist approach, an organizational theory of the school that encompasses the conceptual framework already described. The concept of shared control is then used to shed more light on the theoretical model. (Author/JM)

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Gunnar Berg and Erik Wallin

THE SCHOOL IN AN ORGANIZATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The School as an Organization

This report forms part of a research project entitled "Models of Local Development Planning and Evaluation". The purpose of the project, which is financed by the Swedish Board of Education, is to study the conditions necessary for bringing about educational change in the directions laid down in the national curriculum.

Within the project we are working on the development of a theoretical frame of reference which will make it possible to describe and have a better understanding of how changes take place in schools and in teaching. This can be achieved by analysing and describing a level of the school system which we think has been paid insufficient attention up to now. We call it the organizational level. Two other levels will already be familiar to all those working within the school system. These we term the societal level and the actor level.

At the societal level we have the "principal" of the school, "society" in the broad sense, and its central decision makers. Society has two different systems for steering and controlling the school, an administrative and an educational control system. The latter is primarily a system for controlling goals. It comprises a description of the goals of the school (in educational legislation and curricula) and directives on such matters as working methods, which the actors (i.e. the school staff) themselves interpret and base their actions on. The administrative system is one of direct control, founded on rules, ordinances, regulations and directives. The natural thing would be for the administrative control system to be subordinate to the educational, that is, for the rules to have been drawn up as a means of achieving the goals. However, it does not always work like that. Rules and goals can sometimes be found to be in conflict.

At another level we have the people who play the leading roles in day-to-day teaching and other aspects of routine school activity, that is, the pupils and staff. We can call them the actors of the school and thus

the level at which they operate the actor level. A closer look at this level of the school reveals that what the school does is not only determined by the control exercised by society. It is also governed by the informal rules, practices, norms, power systems, values and so on prevailing, both in the school system generally and in local variants in individual schools, among the people working within the school. These norms, values, power relations, and so forth, stem partly from the traditions and history of the school, but also from the personal backgrounds, histories and knowledge of individuals or groups. Together they can be said to form the nucleus of the fundamental philosophy predominant within the school system. In a particular school they can be said to constitute the school "culture" (Sarason, 1971).

The organizational level lies in between the societal and actor levels. Its characteristics originate in the interplay of society's control and the control exercised by the "culture" of the actor level. Distinctive features of the school as an organization stem from the simultaneous influence of both these levels. In other words, we regard the organizational level as a function of the other two. Between the latter there may be tension and conflict, and it is partly this tension that gives the school organization its specific character. How the influence of the two levels operates can vary from one kind of education to another, sometimes from one school to another.

Since the project was launched in 1976, our work on the school as an organization has been at a theoretical level. Initially we studied the literature on general organization theory and its development. In particular we examined the approach known as OD (organizational development) to find out whether "established" organization theory could offer anything of interest for organizational analyses of the school. It turned out that OD was primarily concerned with organizations in the sense of profit-making firms, and we found the characteristic phenomena of the latter to be different in kind to those of the school organization.

To initiate a discussion on the school as an organization, we evolved what we can call a preliminary set of concepts relating to certain parts of the school organization.

By emphasizing different significant factors we can present different pictures of the school as an organization. We can describe it as a professional organization by referring to that section of its staff which has had a long period of training, and also by stressing attitudes, values, norms, etc, which can be said to constitute a kind of professional code among the staff of the school. Another approach is to consider the school as a coercive organization from the pupils' point of view and discuss the consequences of this. And finally, if we choose to examine its administrative system, we can describe the school as a whole as a bureaucratic organization, considering such matters as the formal routines and rules shaping the activity of the school.

On the basis of this admittedly very rhapsodical account, we can draw the conclusion that the school is an extremely complex organization. Both its task and authority structures are so multifacetted that it would seem reasonable to ask whether the school is not one of the most complex organizations we have in our society.

1.2 Why an Organizational Study of the School?

We have already pointed out that an organizational perspective can facilitate our understanding of the school. Schools do exist, in all their complexity, and one way of looking at them is from the perspective of the school as an organization. Hoyle (1973) puts it like this:

"In spite of differences in terms, the central concern of these studies (of the school as an organisation) is to understand the functioning of schools and particularly the interplay of their various dimensions: formal structure, administrative processes, informal relationships, culture, goals, and so forth" (p 32).

Hoyle stresses understanding. He describes various aspects (dimensions) of the school, all of which can be studied separately. Above all he emphasizes the interplay of these dimensions. Thus, studying the school as an organization brings us closer to a total view of the school. It provides a less detailed picture, but at the same time it reduces the risk of the description being one-sided. This, we feel, is sufficient justification for studying the school as an organization.

Earlier we underlined the fact that there are differences between schools and business organizations and that it is therefore scarcely possible to adopt established organization theory uncritically and apply it to analyses of the school organization. To illustrate this, we shall examine some of these differences more closely:

1. Business firms are characterized by clear criteria of efficiency (maximization of profits). The corresponding criteria applying to schools are more diffuse and at a different level of complexity.

2. A firm's operations are characterized by competition with other firms. There is no such competition between schools.

3. The firm is an open system with continuous and intensive interaction with its environment. The school can perhaps also be regarded as an open system, but is is doubtful whether this openness can be described in systems theory terms. We shall come back to this later.

4. Firms have relatively homogeneous recruitment policies. Schools recruit pupils by coercion, teachers on the basis of purely formal qualifications, and other staff with regard to both formal and informal qualifications. It can also be pointed out that headteachers generally lack administrative training, while such training is absolutely essential for company management.

Thus the differences between schools and firms are considerable. We could analyse other organizations, e.g. hospitals, and find some similarities with schools, but here again we would also find marked differences. To examine the school organization in a fruitful manner, we thus need to evolve an organization theory designed specifically with the school in mind.

Organizational studies of the school could at the same time broaden general organization theory. However, we feel that our primary task is to use the perspective of the school as an organization to increase knowledge of the school and thus make it easier to understand why it operates as it does.

The demands of post-war society for educational change in Sweden can be said to have culminated in the 1970s. The idea used to be that such change would be governed by a scientifically influenced R & D model (cf Wallin, 1979). In its basic form, this model can be described in terms of planning - research - development - diffusion. That is, after a plan-

ning stage, fundamental research is carried out, yielding results which are later used to develop products or routines, these in turn being diffused, in our case in the educational world. This model came to be called into question, the attack being centred on the question of whether its basic suppositions corresponded to the characteristics of schools and education. And in the early 1970s the R & D model was in fact succeeded by various proposals based on the idea that change had to come "from within", i.e. from teachers and other staff within the local school unit.

In line with such arguments work was started on new forms of in-service training, designed to enable different staff groups to work together to increase the individual school's capacity for change in the direction laid down in the national curriculum. As far as we can tell, this change in in-service training has not had the desired effect either, i.e. educational change in line with the reforms. The reason for this is that a variety of attempts at change have been made on premises which disregard essential characteristics of the school, for example as an organization. The desire for greater knowledge about the school, with an eye to change, is one reason for studying the school as an organization. Another reason is that by casting light on the school as an organization we can make it easier to study and intervene in its administration.

In the long term, then, we need to develop a conceptual framework for describing the school as an organization. Such a description should not, however, be carried out on the school's own terms. Like other institutions, the school cannot be described or understood on its own terms. The frontiers of pedagogical research are at present the subject of much debate among educationalists and others. At one time they coincided by and large with the four walls of the classroom. Phenomena in various teaching situations were to a large extent described and analysed on their own terms. In recent years some educationalists have broken with this tradition and examined such phenomena from the point of view of society. In other words, studies have been carried out on terms other than those of the school itself.

By analogy, we believe that the school organization in a perspective of change can only be described and understood <u>from a level other than that of the school itself</u>.

2 THE ORGANIZATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

2.1 A Few Words on the Development of Organization Theory

The development of organization theory in the course of this century has been dominated by three main approaches. The first of these can be characterized as a markedly technocratic phase. Here we find organization theorists such as Taylor and Fayol. The view of the human being predominant at this time, and which left its mark on the thought of these organization theorists, can be described in fairly primitive terms. Man was seen as a physiological machine, ultimately striving for the satisfaction of certain basic needs. The organization's need for maximum efficiency was thus in conflict with general human needs. It had to be possible to stem conflicts if the organization was to function satisfactorily. Taylor "solved" this problem by using the incentive of economic gain to suppress the "irrational" characteristics of workers on shop floors of producing organizations. Similarly Weber, whose work included the development of theories of bureaucratic organizations, stressed the importance of "fine-meshed" systems of rules for controlling the actions of employees. Thus, implicitly, the existence of natural conflict in society was acknowledged.

In the shadow of the depression of the 1930s, a reaction to this technocratic way of thinking in the form of a more humanistically oriented theory of the organization emerged. It was acknowledged that human beings had other needs besides the purely physiological ones and that some regard had to be paid to these in the construction of organizations. Organization theorists such as Mayo, and later Argyris, McGregor and others, held that it was perfectly possible to reconcile the individual's and the organization's needs without relinquishing the efficiency of the organization.

This humanistic period was succeeded by a more radical phase, which has prevailed to the present day in organization theory - that of systems theory.

The underlying conceptions of systems theory can be expressed in terms

of, for example, adaptation, feedback, differentiation, homeostasis and the like. Katz and Kahn (1966) characterize the theory of open systems as follows:

" ... begins by identifying and mapping the repeated cycles of input, transformation, output, and renewed input which comprise the organizational pattern. This approach to organizations represents the adaption of work in biology and in physical sciences by von Bertalanffy and others" (p 28).

The systems theory of the organization is thus, in contrast to the technocratic approach, based on notions of equilibrium within a social system. This means that if an organization is to function effectively, its members should, on the basis of certain aims, share the same underlying values as far as rules, norms, attitudes, etc, are concerned. This spirit of consensus forms the cornerstone for such behaviour and role allocations as will bring about the successful attainment of goals. Conflict is regarded as something basically negative, though inevitable at a superficial level. The strength of the system can be defined in terms of how well conflict which does arise is overcome. Prolonged conflict is a direct threat to the existence of the system.

This simplified account of the development of organization theory in the present century shows that its main concern has been organizations in the sense of profit-making firms. This means that very little interest has been shown for a societal perspective, i.e. how the prevailing economic system affects the "lives" of organizations. This is not surprising in itself, since social reality has always had to be taken as it comes. The main issue, rather, has been one of juggling with available resources as effectively as possible within the framework prescribed by the prevailing social formation. Seen from this point of view, the basic structure of society is relatively uninteresting.

We claimed above that organization theory has primarily been interested in business firms and similar organizations, but there are of course exceptions to this. One organization theorist who can probably be said to be in the forefront of the study of non-profit-making organizations is Amitai Etzioni (1961, 1964). Among other things he introduced the concept of the professional organization, characterized by the fact that

it creates and communicates knowledge rather than goods and services. The goal-directed activities of such organizations are consequently of a different kind to those of, for instance, profit-making firms. Etzioni makes a further distinction between full-fledged professional and semi-professional organizations. In a full-fledged professional organization the emphasis is placed on the creation of knowledge (e.g. a research establishment), while the goal-directed activity of the semi-professional organization (e.g. a school) consists in the communication of knowledge.

By constructing a typology, Etzioni cleared the way for studies of more professionally oriented organizations. These studies came to be focused largely on various types of "people-processing" organizations. Other organizational researchers such as Katz and Kahn (1966) and Perrow (1970) have developed conceptual apparatus for use in studies of "people-processing" organizations.

Superficially it might appear that organization theory has been broadened by studies of this kind. However, this is rather doubtful, since their underlying theoretical approach is the same as that used in the study of business organizations, i.e. the systems approach discussed earlier. Often this perspective is simply taken for granted, without anyone stopping to ask whether it is compatible with the type of phenomena central to the organization being examined.

2.2 Organizational Research on the School

Only to a limited extent has the school been at the focus of organizational researchers' interest. What has been done in this area comes chiefly from the United States and Great Britain. Most interest in the school as an organization has been among educational sociologists, and then often under other headings, e.g. studies of teacher and pupil roles.

In an earlier report (Berg, 1980) we presented a survey of research literature with a direct bearing on the school as an organization. Works less directly connected with our field of interest (e.g. Waller, 1932; Lortie, 1975; Arfwedson, 1979) were not included. Nor was the particularly rich body of American literature which approaches the school as an orga-

nization from various OD angles. For a detailed survey of works falling into the latter category, see Fullan et al. (1980).

We can conclude, therefore, that sociological research directly aimed at the school as an organization has been limited in extent. Almost all the authors we shall refer to below stress this and would like to see more research in this field. Among these is Bidwell (1965), who argues that "Few students of organizations have turned their attention to schools, and few students of schools have been sensitive to their organizational attributes" (p 972). In Sweden, Abrahamsson (1974), for one, has called attention to this state of affairs. He writes: "There is no coherent sociological theory of the school as an organization, and there is not even a systematized conceptual apparatus which could be used as a natural working basis" (p 297, our translation). The British researcher Hoyle (1973) argues along the same lines, and adds that " ... the existing theories of organizations and administration are not particularly relevant in this context" (p 56).

Several researchers, then, are in reasonable agreement on the manifest lack of research in this field. There is less agreement, however, on what the basic approach of such research should be. Below are examples of two different approaches:

1. Research which seeks to identify features specific to the school as an organization (e.g. Corwin, 1967; Patriksson, 19[illegible], Shipman, 1968).
2. Research aimed at identifying institutional differences between different types of organization (e.g. Etzioni, 1961; Blau and Scott, 1962; Katz and Kahn, 1966). This kind of research has often been directed towards establishing universal typologies.

From our point of view the first of these types is the more interesting, since it is the school as an organization in itself which we are mainly interested in, not the school in relation to other organizations.

Thus one categorization of organizationally oriented educational research can be made in terms of these different approaches. A more detailed categorization can be carried out on the basis of the theoretical orientation of the researchers concerned. In this way a further two main ca-

tegories can be distinguished.

Some of the authors we refer to below have a more marked functionalist approach, while others have more of a structuralist theoretical basis. The former see the school organization primarily as a social system, composed of various parts which together form a social whole. Their central concern is what functions the parts have in relation to each other and in relation to the whole. In other words, a functionalist does not see the school as an organization primarily in terms of the actor groups operating within it. Researchers with more of a structuralist approach do not view the school primarily from this angle, but see it rather as an organization ultimately determined by the society in which it operates. Its freedom of action is thus ultimately shaped by the economic, social and political structure of society. This does not, it is held, rule out all scope for alternative courses of action within this structure. The essential point is that there are more or less clearly defined limits to the extent of such action.

It should be stressed that it is unusual for researchers to declare their theoretical starting points in such explicit and precise terms as these. The attempts we make below to assign researchers to one or other tradition are in other words based on our interpretations of their works. It should also be pointed out, of course, that our categorization is extremely crude and should not be carried too far. We shall give examples of the arguments various researchers put forward on the school as an organization. We shall discuss works by Bidwell (1965) and Corwin (1967), whom we consider to have a basically functionalist approach in their research. We shall then refer to Abrahamsson (1974) and Davies (1974), whom we regard as structuralists.

Bidwell (ibid) does not, like a number of other researchers, base his discussion of the school as an organization on a general organization theory. Instead he concentrates on various features which he considers specific to the school as an organization. He believes, for example, that the role structure of the school is characterized by a structurally determined dichotomy between the staff on the one hand and the pupils on the other. Pupils are recruited solely on the basis of place of residence and age, and neither the individual school nor the pupil has any actual

control over recruitment. The staff, on the other hand, are recruited with a certain measure of voluntariness on the part of both employers and employees. Bidwell also argues that the school shows clear signs of bureaucracy, its typical organizational characteristics being a functional division of labour, clearly stated limits of jurisdiction, hierarchical decision making and a relatively strict system of rules. Some form of autonomy is, however, necessary for the teacher to be able to perform his duties in the classroom. This autonomy Bidwell calls structural looseness. Finally, Bidwell pursues an interesting line of discussion on the concept debureaucratization, by which he refers to the possibility of conflict between different types of professionalism. We shall return to this later.

The American sociologist Corwin has also studied the question of the school as an organization (1967). In our opinion he is to be regarded as a functionalist, but unlike others he discusses his basic theoretical approach and does not take it for granted. By way of introduction Corwin attempts to define the concept complex organization:

"A complex organization consists of (1) stable patterns of interaction, (2) among coalitions of groups having a collective identity (e.g., a name and location(s)), (3) pursuing interests and accomplishing given tasks, and (4) coordinated by power and authority structures" (op cit, p 161).

He also examines the concepts functional autonomy and structural lag. The former refers to "the tendency for divisions of an organization to become self-sufficient" and the latter to "the corresponding tendency for its parts to change at different rates" (p 169). Corwin suggests that these two phenomena cause specific coordination problems in complex organizations. In this context he believes that official goals can eventually be replaced by other aims which may even be in conflict with the original objective. He calls this goal displacement. When describing a study of bureaucratic rules at a school Corwin touches on Bidwell's discussion of debureaucratization. The quoted study suggests that the teachers concerned are fully assimilated into the bureaucratic structure of the school and that the professionalism which develops also corresponds to the bureaucratic structure, even though the latter need not manifest itself in explicitly formulated rules. Corwin discusses

further the formal authority system of the organization, which he considers to be its backbone. He does not, however, say anything about what problems this system is intended to solve.

One researcher with a more structural interest in the school as an organization is Abrahamsson (1974). He sees education as a dependent variable and stresses " ... the secondary role education plays in bringing about social change compared with economic, political and technological factors" (p 306, our translation). Abrahamsson also discusses the manifest and latent functions of the school in society, mentioning among others its socializing, differentiating and custodial functions. These functions, then, are ultimately governed by the existing social structure and consequently the activity of the school organization is ultimately determined by society. Abrahamsson also argues that clear parallels can be drawn between the bureaucratic structure of the school and Weber's normative characterization of the bureaucratic "ideal type". He points for example to the hierarchical authority structure of the school.

The British researcher Davies (1974) approaches the school as an organization on premises very similar to Abrahamsson's. He is particularly critical of the - often implicit - use of a systems approach as a basis for interpretation in organizational studies of the school. He writes, for example:

" ... if schools are to be thought of as open systems, then the sheer fact that this openness has clearly varied over time and differs between existing schools should serve as a reminder of the lack of historical perspective in systems approaches generally" (p 254 f).

He also argues that schools are created to perform specific social tasks, but that within such a framework organizations often develop a "life of their own". Davies looks into certain features of the school organization which distinguish it from business organizations. He points out, for example, that teachers at a school are recruited on certain formal criteria of achievement, while pupils are recruited on "ascriptive" criteria. In addition, Davies examines the relationship between professionalism and bureaucracy and suggests that " ... if schools are to be thought of as bureaucracies then they must be thought of as bureaucracies which employ predominantly professions". He continues:

"They (Blau and Scott, et al) focus on the clash between positional and professional authority, a clash which has particular force in a number of ways within educational organizations with the result that both inter- and intra-organizational relations within education tend to be marked by what Bidwell ... called 'structural looseness'" (p 274).

Such professionalism presupposes a certain degree of autonomy.

Davies concludes his article by again underlining the importance of focusing organizational studies of the school on its specific organizational features. He believes that the lack of studies of this kind can be explained by the over-dominant position of the systems approach within organization theory.

2.3 Summary and Discussion

The works discussed here tackle the school organization from different theoretical angles. It is interesting to note that, despite this, they seem to agree that the school organization as a whole can be described in terms of bureaucracy and professionalism. For a job to be performed professionally a certain degree of autonomy is required. There must in other words be a certain degree of discretion left to the professional to make his own decisions on the basis of rules of a more normative character. The teacher's discretion in this context is expressed by Davies as follows: "Teachers have little control over whom they teach, more over what they teach, and most over how they teach" (p 276). If this autonomy is eroded by bureaucratic rules, the professional element in the work carried out also decreases. And, conversely, if the rule system is relaxed, there is greater autonomy and thus more scope for professional behaviour. In other words, there is a "natural" conflict between professionalism and bureaucracy.

If organizational researchers are in relative agreement on this line of reasoning, their views are all the more conflicting when it comes to the pupils of the school. The more functionally oriented among them regard pupils as clients, and consequently look upon the school as a service organization with the job of providing pupils with an educational service. The view is that generally speaking pupils are in a traditional client relationship to their professional teachers. The following com-

parison of the client and pupil roles illustrates our view that the pupil role does not fit this description all that well:

Role of Client	Role of Pupil
Universalistic relations to the professional	Combination of universalistic and particularistic relations
The client generally pays for the service he receives	The pupil generally receives all schooling free of charge
The client generally turns to the professional voluntarily	The pupil attends school ultimately because of an obligation
The client and the professional are hardly members of the same organization	Pupils are full-fledged members of the organization

We would suggest that if the pupil is to be regarded as a client in the traditional sense, then he can hardly be considered a full-fledged member of the organization. A person cannot be both the client of an organization and a full-fledged member of it.

This means that pupils cannot be regarded as clients in the conventional sense of the word. As indicated above, such a view would imply that the relationship between teachers and pupils was essentially universalistic. The undesirability of this is indicated by the current Swedish national curricula, which, quite the contrary, advocate a warm and close relationship between teachers and pupils. We believe that pupils are full-fledged organizational members. The question then remains how we should view them in an organizational perspective. If we see the school from the angle of Abrahamsson, Davies and others, it would seem reasonable to regard its pupil actors from a coercive point of view.

Practically all the authors consulted call for more research on the school as an organization. In our survey of the literature (presented in its entirety in Berg, 1980), we found a number of fundamental concepts which we believe can be used to describe the school in organizational terms. These concepts are:

- the school as a professional organization
- the school as a bureaucratic organization
- the school as a coercive organization

We believe then that, using this very crude conceptual apparatus, we can approach the question of the school as an organization on a descriptive level. However, it is not enough just to have a few basically descriptive concepts as tools for organizational studies of the school. We must in addition reflect on the school as an organization at a more comprehensive theoretical level - and on the basis of such reflection select a metatheory whose fundamental shape takes into account the phenomena we believe to be characteristic of the school. The knowledge we might gain at the next stage of our investigation by describing the school organization in the terms stated above can then be related to the more comprehensive theoretical basis we have selected for the study of this complex organization. In this way, we hope gradually to be able to build up a body of knowledge about the school organization on the basis of certain expressly stated premises. By alternating between theory and practice in this way, we hope to be able to construct, step by step, a theory of the school as an organization.

3 HIERARCHY AND STRUCTURAL CONFLICT

3.1 Introduction

In the introductory chapter of this report we related the organizational view of the school to two other levels at which the school system can be described: the societal level in a general sense, with the laws and regulations resulting from decisions made at that level, and the actor level, consisting of the headteachers, pupils, teachers and other employees who determine as actors the activities of the school. We placed the school as an organization in an intermediate position, as a function of the other two levels.

By making this our basis for further analysis of the premises on which the school organization can be described, we have chosen an educational approach and not the approach of general organization theory. The three-level structural model we use also forms the basis of, for example, the curriculum theory work of Dahllöf (1971), Lundgren (1977) and Svingby (1977 and 1978).

To achieve its educational objectives, society decides on various means of controlling the process. Lundgren (1977) talks (see Wallin, 1979) about three different systems of control: the goal system, frame system and formal rule system. He expands on this idea as follows:

Economic	Social Structure	Political
Curriculum	Administrative Apparatus	Judicial Apparatus
Goal System	Frame System	Formal rule System
governing	constraining	regulating
	Educational Process	
	Psychological conceptual apparatus	

(From Lundgren, op cit, p 38)

Lundgren uses rules, frames and goals as explanatory concepts. We would stress that they all result from a series of decisions made at societal and/or state level.

Thus the guidelines and activities of the school are ultimately regulated by external circumstances and decisions. An organization like the school cannot be left to be steered by unpredictable market forces, as a firm is, since it has to maintain a certain degree of stability in its socializing role. Consequently the flexibility vis-à-vis the environment which a firm aims at is not relevant to the school type of organization. As we shall see in more detail in section 4.2, the school's "capacity for self-renewal" is not a question of greater adaptation to its environment, but rather a matter of change within the framework ultimately stipulated by power relations in society.

Thus, in the last resort, the school is controlled by political forces. Consequently it must of necessity have some form of hierarchical structure, since the processes governing its activities are basically determined by interests outside the school system itself. A basic assumption of our intended organizational theory of the school must therefore be that the organizational structure of the school is hierarchical.

Because the school is socially conditioned in this way, but also because its actors develop a "culture" (Sarason, 1971) in the form of norms and attitudes in the course of their activities, it is of great importance to take the historical perspective into account when studying the school as an organization. As for the development of the school culture (or code) (see Lundgren, 1977; Arfwedson and Lundman, 1980), it can be said on the one hand that it is a result of actual activities at school and in the classroom, but it is also influenced by both current and past rule systems, which have a braking effect on these activities.

Both these points of departure contain the potential for conflict, both between and within levels.

3.2 The School as a Hierarchy

A distinction is often made in general organization theory between "organic" and "mechanistic" organizational structures. These have such characteristics as the following:

Mechanistic organization	Organic organization
Functional specialization	A network structure of communication, control and authority
Strict hierarchical division of tasks	Control through community of interest with the firm
Precise definition of the rights and obligations of organization members	Management seen as a coordinator rather than a giver of commands
Paths of communication follow the "official channels" principle	Paths of communication steered by needs rather than by formalities

(Based on Burns and Stalker, 1961)

In general organization literature with a systems approach, the organic structure is often presented as being the most desirable, while the mechanistic structure is rejected, either wholly or in part. Such judgements are generally made without heed to the nature of the phenomena characterizing the organization being studied.

The organic principle is based on a theory of the ability of a system to adapt quickly to environmental fluctuations and thus has a systems theory foundation (see further p 21 ff). The mechanistic structure corresponds largely to the bureaucratic criteria we discussed earlier, and even if superficially the school of today reminds us of these criteria, this does not mean that the school should or can move in the direction of a more organic type of organization. If the school is to change it must do so on its own terms, and this involves a development within the framework of a hierarchical - non-bureaucratic - organization. The school is then seen as being the subject of what Sandberg (1973) calls "institutional investments":

"At the same time, institutional investments in the form of money, material and staff are made at strategic points with the aim of creating organizations with an autonomous capacity for analysis, adaptation and innovation - systems whose rules encourage change and whose members can live with conflict. This adaptability is created by investing in institutions, giving them more resources and greater scope to experiment and learn by their reactions to direct feedback from their environment. The job of the politicians would thus be to create experimenting and self-changing institutions and ensure that adaptation takes place within broadly defined guidelines. In this way it is possible to avoid the bureaucracy which results from attempts to follow the alternative path: detailed central control" (p 134, our translation).

This type of complex organization cannot in other words be controlled by making rules to cover every situation which might arise. Sandberg's view is that politicians should evolve frameworks indicating the desired approach. Management by overall guidelines rather than by rules is closely akin to what Ramström (1963) calls "control management" ("kontrollstyrning"):

" ... indicates what requirements must be placed on behaviour and thus regulate how far the employee is empowered to make his own decisions. The more specific these controls are, the smaller the freedom of action becomes ... " (p 31, our translation).

This line of reasoning has been developed in the educational field by Svingby (1977). Her starting point is to regard the school primarily as a professional organization, controlled in the last resort by the overall objectives set by society. Within these guidelines there is relatively wide scope for different groups of actors at different hierarchical levels of the school system to themselves interpret the intentions of society. In her doctoral thesis (1978), Svingby sums this up as follows:

" ... presupposes that directives and regulations are interpreted at the lower levels before they are applied. The basis for these interpretations (a basic educational philosophy) is determined by many factors. The process can result in various interpretations (at each level of application ...) More or less definite limits are placed on interpretation, however, and interpretations going beyond these limits are unacceptable" (our translation).

Svingby calls this control model shared control ("gemensam styrning"), and this means that the school is "debureaucratized" in the sense that

detailed rules are replaced by guidelines. Svingby's model implies also that the school retains its basic hierarchical structure. This does not mean, however, that its hierarchical levels need be the same as those which characterize the school of today.

To sum up, one essential component of the theory of the school organization we are working towards is that the basic structure of the school has of necessity to be hierarchical.

Although a hierarchical school structure is a necessary consequence of our points of departure, we shall now, in order to shed more light on this proposition, develop in more detail the contrary approach of a systems theory of the school.

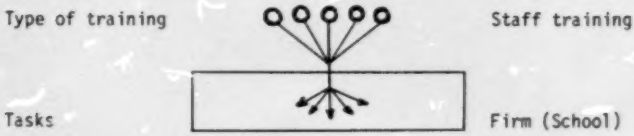
3.3 Systems Theory and the School

As a rule, modern organization theories have a systems approach. In other words organizations are seen as wholes which can be divided into a number of sub-systems. The latter are in constant interaction. A change in one sub-system causes some kind of change (or adaptation) in the other sub-systems. This assumes that the feedback mechanisms between the sub-systems are highly developed. The factors which determine whether a sub-system (and thus the whole system) changes or not are generally factors in the environment in which the organization's operations are located. Thus the organization must have a highly developed system of communication with its environment. Questioning the fundamental functions of an organization is not generally part of a systems approach.

An interesting question is whether the school is officially regarded as an organization in the systems theory sense outlined above. It is impossible to find an unequivocal answer. However, in the Report of the Swedish Commission on the Internal Work of Schools (known as the SIA Report) (SOU 1974:53), little distinction is made between schools and other types of organization, as the following quotation illustrates:

"Schools, hospitals and similar establishments are usually characterized sociologically as 'people-processing' organizations: organizations with the aim of changing people by various forms of influence (processing) towards certain desired target conditions" (p 74, our translation).

The Report also discusses staff training in schools, and the view is clearly that the basic structure of staff training can remain the same irrespective of the type of organization.



(p 672, our translation)

Elsewhere in the Report arguments are put forward which closely resemble our discussion of the "organic organization" (cf p 18):

"The pupil's development is the result of an interaction between individual and environment, involving mutual influence. At the same time as the individual has to be able to adapt, it is also necessary for the school to be a dynamic organization with resources for change. When difficulties arise, they are not seen purely in terms of the individual's failure to fulfil his functions. They may also be the result of inadequate adaptation of the environment to the individual. This more dynamic view ought to counteract the idea that educational problems are a more or less permanent property of the pupil" (p 684 f, our translation).

The Report makes a direct link-up with the systems theory of business administration in connection with a discussion of "line-staff conflicts within the education system":

"When studying an organization in society, e.g. a firm, hospital or school, it is necessary to regard it as an open system. That means we must take into account those relations between the organization and its environment which are of significance to the goals and activities of the organization" (p 751, our translation).

These various statements can be taken to mean that it is perfectly possible and reasonable to analyse the school organization in systems terms.

A purely systems approach applied to the school would mean that in theory it is possible to create rapid channels of information and feedback within the school system which provide the prior conditions for speedy acceptance of changes of various kinds, e.g. in opinion, or such as may be brought about by a new curriculum, if the latter has its roots outside the school. Changes at the actor level, e.g. as a result of new trends

in teaching methods, would also make themselves felt very quickly in the activities of the school. Ultimately this would deprive the school system of its stability and subject it to constant pressure in different - and perhaps conflicting - directions.

To try to cast some empirical light on the question we can examine an assessment of what were known as the SSK experiments[1] carried out in Uppsala (Fahlgren et al, 1978). Much of the activity of school today is governed by bureaucratic rules. The idea behind the SSK experiments was to make these rules rather less "finely meshed", i.e. try out a more generally formulated system of rules, for example with regard to resource utilization. This gave superior and subordinate actors at local school level greater scope for independent initiatives and action. The idea behind the experiments was to study how far this relative increase in freedom was put to use by those most affected by the change and what consequences this had. After the scheme had been operating for three years it was found that the greater degree of freedom for local initiatives had only been utilized to a marginal extent. The result can be illustrated as follows:

"Normal" situation		SSK experiments		Actual result	
Societal level (S)		S		S	
↓	Specific rules	↓	General rules	↓	General rules
Organizational level (O)		O		O	
↓	Specific rules	↓	General rules	↓	Specific rules
Actor level (A)		A		A	

The experiments showed that the school did not come up to the expectation that it would function organically in the systems theory sense. Channels of communication may have been sufficiently developed, but other factors in the system counteracted overall adaptation to the new situation. We believe this is because the school does not meet the specifications for a system in the systems theory sense. In other words, a view of the school

1) These experiments were concerned with the relationship between schools, central and local government in a perspective of decentralization.

organization based on systems theory is contrary to the school's characteristics as a social institution.

3.4 Conflict in the Education System

If an organization is to function in line with systems theory criteria, then some fundamental values must be shared by its members. That is, there must be a widely shared view of what is good for the organization. In a firm this common conception might be, for example, that everyone sees the need for certain minimum sales levels, enabling the firm to survive and jobs to be maintained.

It is rather more doubtful whether such consensus can be attained within a social institution such as the school. Looking beneath the surface of the harmony which the national curricula and other political documents express, we discover that the education system is characterized by conflict at a number of levels. Below we shall illustrate some of these conflicts.

3.4.1 Conflict at the Societal Level

The ultimate "principal" or "employer" of the school is "society", which formulates both its goals and its rule system. But "society" in this context is by no means a straightforward concept. It is a function of a variety of political interests. The "principal" of the school can thus be said to represent several different political approaches, and consequently the school is controlled from without by a policy founded on compromise solutions, at the basis of which are various, often conflicting philosophies. The political documents setting out among other things goals and guidelines for the school are as a result diffuse and unclear and hence shift the conflict over to the school, where these goals and guidelines have to be interpreted and given concrete meaning in the school's activities.

3.4.2 Conflict at the Organizational Level

Society's means of control over the school are both administrative and educational.

This results in two systems of control with different traditions. The philosophy of educational control has its basis in liberal-humanistic assumptions (Arfwedson, 1977), while the administrative control system originates in the growth of the state machinery itself (ibid). Educational control is expressed in the overall goals embodied in the 1969 Swedish Comprehensive School Curriculum (Läroplan för grundskolan. Allmän del. 1969), for example, as follows:

"Schools should therefore have an overall orientation towards promoting pupils' development into self-reliant members of society, with an interest in the rest of the world which leads to personal involvement and a sense of shared international responsibility" (our translation).

These two systems of control are not coordinated, and indeed they are often in conflict (e.g. cooperation versus grades). As a rule, the "solution" to this conflict is that the educational control system has to give way to the administrative.

Svingby (1977) gives examples of this:

"In the general sections (of the curricula) inter-subject studies are recommended, for example, while the outline timetables divide the available time according to subjects and main parts of subjects ... Further, in the general sections the development of the pupil's personality is stressed as the central concern. At the same time, pupils are evaluated by grades which put the emphasis on academic knowledge - hence standardized tests" (our translation).

Further examples of the conflict between goals and rules can be found in the SIA Report (SOU 1974:53):

" ... it would seem reasonable to claim that the job description applying to teachers in the School Ordinance is at odds both with the description of the teacher's role in the current curricula, a description which has been at the heart of the school reforms of recent decades, and with the actual work most teachers put into various school activities. The development of the teacher's role described in 10.5.6 (i.e. a more socially oriented role) is foreign to the Ordinance, and so, therefore, is the situation which arises when the school seeks to become more involved in social and leisure-oriented work" (p 671 f, our translation).

Nordin (in Berg et al, 1980a) discusses the way goals and rules can collide and what the consequences can be:

"A few years ago the National Social Welfare Board called together educationalists from four municipalities to discuss the integration of nursery schools and junior levels of the 9-year comprehensive school. A pilot scheme was to be started, and a working party was set up consisting of representatives from the National Social Welfare Board, the Board of Education, and teacher training colleges. All of them were interested in the project and wanted to put it into operation, but headteachers had considerable misgivings. Quite clearly, total integration would make teaching on a conventional timetable at the junior level impossible. A departure from the timetable outlines set out in the 1969 Comprehensive School Curriculum was judged to be impossible" (our translation).

At the organizational level the basis of such conflicts as these is a contradiction between the professional and administrative/bureaucratic structures. We shall not go into this further here, but refer instead to the next chapter.

3.4.3 Conflict at the Actor Level

Operating within the school organization are groups of actors with different interests. This is one reason why there are divergent views on how the goals of the school can be interpreted. Quite often such differences of opinion lead to conflict between different groups and individuals operating at the actor level.

We can illustrate this by briefly describing the mood at a school which has collaborated with us in connection with our project. In recent years the atmosphere among the staff there has come to be characterized by conflict between a small group of teachers and the rest of the staff. The cause of this conflict is that the small group of teachers has tried to break with traditional patterns and try out new methods and forms of work in its lessons. This work was and is founded on what the national curriculum has to say about the importance of organizing teaching on the basis of a "total" view of the individual, school and society.

Initially the non-traditional pattern of teaching worked extremely well. Various inter-disciplinary projects were carried out with great success. The pupils were also enthusiastic at first and worked with great commitment. Gradually, though, enthusiasm dwindled. Group projects worked more and more sluggishly - some pupils exploited the free working forms to "skive off". The other members of staff adopted a wait-and-see attitude

at first, but became decidedly critical after about a term of the new methods. At a staff meeting members of the group were more or less "called to account" for their actions. They were accused of causing general disorder. The view was aired that the free teaching methods the group had used would lead to a general subversion of norms and were thus a threat to the entire operation of the school. The headmaster, who up to that point had remained neutral on the question, tried to mediate between the two sides. The result was that the conflict was temporarily patched up, but the atmosphere at the school still remained fairly strained and unamenable to reason.

Our study of the experimental work at this school suggests that within the framework of school goals and guidelines there is scope for activities with entirely or partly different orientations. In other words there is an area of choice which local school actors can "fight" over. This presupposes, however, that these actors are aware of this freedom of action and have an idea of what limits are placed on it (see also chapter 5).

3.5 Conclusions

As will have become clear from the above account, conflicts within the education system can ultimately be traced back to various political and historical factors which determine the structure of the school. For example, whereas the tradition and history of the school are dominated by a classical educational ideal, society tries to assert a more social liberal one. This fundamental conflict then makes its presence felt at all levels of the education system and finds expression in a variety of ways. It is probably this basic conflict which is behind even everyday staffroom discussions about, for example, pupils' chewing gum and wearing coats and jackets in the classroom, supplying pencils to pupils who forget their own, and so on.

In the light of our discussion so far we can venture the claim that the school as an organization is characterized to a great extent by the kind of conflict we have exemplified. It might be asked whether this is really necessary and desirable. Can the school develop into an organization whose chief feature is harmony? The answer to the latter question is no.

As long as the school is subject to political control, conflicts are bound to arise at different levels. Conflict, not consensus, characterizes the school as a social institution and hence as an organization too. The organizational theory of the school we are aiming at must therefore make the fundamental assumption that structural conflict is a natural phenomenon within the school. It follows from its basic hierarchical structure. As we mentioned earlier, however, a hierarchical structure does not necessarily entail inflexible bureaucracy in the traditional sense.

To sum up, an organizational theory of the school must be founded on two basic assumptions:

1. The school is, and has to be, a hierarchical organization.
2. The school is, and has to be, an organization characterized at all levels by structural conflict.

In a later chapter we shall outline an overall organization theory corresponding to these basic criteria, but first we shall fill in the background by discussing the school as a coercive, professional, and bureaucratic organization.

4 PRELIMINARY CONCEPTUAL APPARATUS FOR DESCRIBING THE COMPLEX SCHOOL ORGANIZATION

In earlier chapters we discussed the school as a social phenomenon (but also as part of the state machinery) so as to be able to stipulate certain conditions for the formulation of a theory of the school as an organization. We have established that the school organization is hierarchical in its basic structure, with the consequences this has, for example, for the viability of a discussion of the school from a systems angle. The general model we have selected has educational roots and takes into account the conditions governing any work aimed at increasing knowledge and understanding of the school.

The picture we have presented and the model we have selected, however, are only of metatheoretical significance. The organization which we have discussed as a function of social influences and actors' activities must also be describable and analysable within a more specific conceptual framework. Within the metatheoretical model discussed, we shall attempt in this chapter to describe a set of conceptual tools which will enable us to achieve the desired level of theoretical specificity. We would stress that we regard this conceptual apparatus as preliminary, but would also point out that it bears a close relation to the conclusions we drew from our survey of the literature (see chapter 2).

4.1 The Coercive Organization

Influenced partly by the works of the sociologist Amitai Etzioni (1961, 1964) we would describe the school as a coercive organization. By this we mean that pupils are recruited to schools solely on the basis of their age and place of residence. The obligation to go to school in the first place - i.e. compulsory school attendance - we would call structural coercion. The term "coercive organization" conjures up other types of establishment with coercive recruitment, such as prisons, mental hospitals and the like. We would therefore stress that, compared with such organizations as these, the structural coercion of the school of today has to be regarded as relatively mild.

What then does a view of the school as a coercive organization entail?

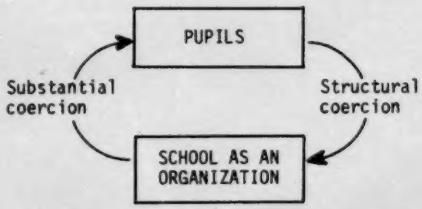
In what way is the notion a serviceable tool for analysis? We shall discuss these questions below, starting off with a short historical survey.

The introduction of the folkskola (primary school) in Sweden in 1842 meant basically that universal school attendance was made compulsory by law. The structural coercion this involved was not at that time regarded as self-evident by the broad masses of the population. Richardson (1973) writes in this regard:

"It also proved difficult to induce parents to send their children to school, with the result that attendance was often extremely irregular: as late as the 1880s it could happen that half the class was absent when the primary school inspector came to call" (p 34, our translation).

Clearly, then, the introduction of compulsory school attendance involved conflict. It can perhaps be put as follows: it was not just a question of "the people's right to education", as liberal school reformers often maintained; it was (and is) at least as much a matter of their duty to be educated.

The problem of getting pupils to attend the compulsory school at all can be assumed to have left its mark on the organization and internal working of the school. It was probably a contributory reason why schools organized their teaching in a way very much resembling military drill. A drill method was perhaps the only realistic option open to the teacher for keeping oversized classes in order, classes which consisted, moreover, of pupils alienated from school work to a greater or lesser extent. This in turn created what we can call substantial coercion, i.e. the coercion, once at school, to submit to certain predetermined instruction, in certain sequences, at certain times, given by certain people, in a certain place, and so on. This can be summarized in the diagram below:



If at one time opinions differed as to the justification of compulsory school attendance, it can be assumed that its necessity is generally acknowledged nowadays. As this acceptance became more widespread, it should in theory also have been possible to change the substantial coercion on the pupil. And this is what has happened, too, though it is rather doubtful whether the rate of change has answered the need for change.

This account of what is a complex historical process is both simplified and superficial. Naturally we do not claim that compulsory school attendance alone has given us the school organization we have today. Our aim was to draw attention to one of the factors - one which is often overlooked - which we believe to be central to the emergence of the school organization we have now. To put it another way, without compulsory school attendance we would probably have ended up with a different school organization.

The SIA Report (SOU 1974:53) also discusses the question of the school as a coercive organization:

"If participation in an organization is to be regarded as voluntary, there must be certain values held in common by those constituting the organization and those who formulate its goals. Conflicts can occur, but they are solved ... Otherwise the organization is dissolved. If, on the other hand, the link with the organization is one of obligation, real goal conflicts can arise. This can happen within the compulsory school, but also within the formally voluntary sector of education, in so far as it, too, is in practice made obligatory for the individual by a combination of qualification requirements, rules and the employment situation" (p 874, our translation).

As the Report suggests, one fundamental problem in an organization of this type is that goal conflicts are not at the same level as the type of conflict which can arise among school staff and which can be tackled in a different manner. By analogy with our earlier discussion, we can refer to the latter as substantial conflicts, while the conflicts referred to in the SIA extract are primarily structural in nature.

4.2 The Professional Organization

The school is sometimes described as a professional organization, in which the teachers are the professionals. The concept "professionalism" can be defined in both quantitative and qualitative terms. Quantitatively we can define a "professional" as a person performing some trade or profession who has undergone a long period of training at at least post-secondary level. To supplement this definition with a more qualitative aspect we can quote Chambliss (1977):

"Professionalism is a social relation involving practitioners of narrowly specialized skills (medicine, law, education, research) agreeing to put their skills at others' disposal in exchange for the right to regulate their own behaviour instead of being regulated by contracts with consumers and the courts" (p 259, our translation).

The factor linking members of a profession can be expressed in terms of certain shared conceptions of the basic principles governing the practice of that profession. Sandberg (1973) writes in this regard:

"A profession is characterized by highly developed and applied theory, a professional ethos which on the one hand protects the public by promoting social responsibility and on the other has a kind of PR function, an esprit de corps and a particular perspective on reality ... " (p 109, our translation).

This professional ethos consists of fundamental attitudes, values and norms which together make up a complex moral outlook, a view of what is right and wrong. We could perhaps say that in the professional organization this ethos or code is the mechanism ultimately regulating the behaviour of the organizational members. In the bureaucratic organization, by contrast, the actors' behaviour is regulated by a rule system.

To simplify matters we can define a professional organization in purely quantitative terms, for example, as an organization dominated by actors with a long period of training. Etzioni (1964) suggests that the "full-fledged" professional organization is devoted to the creation and application of knowledge, while the function of actually communicating knowledge is taken care of by the semi-professional organization.

On this basis we can define the school as a semi-professional organiza-

tion. One of its tasks is to communicate knowledge, chiefly to young people. However, although the school may satisfy the quantitative requirements we place on a semi-professional organization, it is less certain whether it fits a more qualitative definition. The basis of the latter kind of definition is, as we mentioned above, that the actors' behaviour is ultimately controlled by the mechanism of a professional code. Our experience suggests that bureaucratic rules, rather, tend to be regarded as the primary instruments of control. In this regard Etzioni (ibid) points to various areas of activity characteristic of the professional organization:

"There are three areas of activity in professional organizations: (a) major goal activities carried out by professionals and almost completely under the authority of the professional who performs the activity or directs the semi-professionals and non-professionals who perform it, (b) secondary activities performed by administrators and non-professional personnel under their control, and (c) secondary activities performed by the professionals" (p 86).

Organizations of this kind require some kind of division of labour between goal activities (i.e. teaching) and more secondary activities (i.e. administration). Etzioni writes:

"In sum the dilemma of combining professional and administrative authority is handled in professional organizations by dividing the responsibilities so that the goal activities are controlled by the professionals, the means activities by the administrators, with the whole structure supervised by a middleman who has greater administrative skills and authority than the average professional, but more professional authority and competence than the average administrator because of his professionally oriented administrative training and experience" (p 87).

The question is who this "middleman" would be in the school organization.

A characteristic feature of the school is that the teacher is placed in a web of bureaucratic rules which combined together obstruct the development of the school into a more full-fledged professional organization. For such a development to take place, the actors operating within the school must be given the opportunity (or be obliged) to evolve a professional code which matches society's objectives for the school. In this way the teacher could become more professional, that is, to refer back to our earlier discussion, develop a more considered attitude to his teaching

role. Seen from this point of view a teaching situation cannot be described in technical terms, but in terms of goal-directed or "intentional" acts (Wallin, 1976) between teachers and pupils. In a working paper drawn up for our project, Wallin (ibid) writes that teaching is fundamentally an ethical question. He continues:

"This is true at a broad social level - the national curricula are political documents founded on a particular philosophy and conception of the human being. But teaching is just as much a question of ethics for the teacher, whose task it is to work towards the realization of the objectives expressed in the curriculum" (our translation).

If this outlook were to permeate the education system, the school would probably stand a realistic chance of developing into a professional organization even in the more qualitative sense.

A question worth asking is how the ethical code which we believe could predominate in the professional school organization might be described. As we mentioned above, such a code would have to be compatible with society's educational objectives and the values they are based on. These objectives can be equated with the "overall goals" of the school as expressed in the Curricula for the Comprehensive School of 1969 and 1980 (Läroplan för grundskolan. 1969 and 1980). There we find statements to the effect that pupils should "collaborate", "show consideration", "help each other", "experiment and come to their own decisions", be given "an ability to evaluate actively and critically", etc (our translations). Taken together these formulations express a humanistically oriented view of the individual, and the curricula testify to a "total" or integral approach to the individual, school and education. The import of this total view is that knowledge and skills must be integrated with social education and that teaching situations to cope with this approach must be evolved.

The SIA Report (SOU 1974:53) also discusses this question:

"In the view of the Commission, the work of the teacher should not be allowed to become specialized to the teaching of facts alone, while the pupil's personal problems are referred to school welfare staff. The main reason for this is that successful teaching requires a thorough acquaintance with the pupil. The teacher's role should be based on a total view which agrees with the socio-educational conception proposed by the (1946)

School Commission. A total view also makes it necessary for service regulations to indicate that the 'other duties of the teacher' are as essential a part of the job as work connected with lessons. A total view of the teacher's role also means that the content and methods of these other duties should be paid due attention in basic and in-service training (p 676, our translation).

The Report of the Swedish Commission on Teacher Education of 1974 (SOU 1978:86; English summary: Teachers for a School in Transition) takes up this issue under the heading "Human development must be viewed in an integral perspective":

"The social and cognitive development of the individual are sometimes regarded as separate processes. Cognitive development is then seen as more or less divorced from social development. According to this view, the teaching of knowledge can be regarded as the communication of objective, comprehensive information, free from all value judgements.

In the view of the Commission, the various components of an individual's development - physical maturing, the development of knowledge and communication skills, the formation of norms, social development, etc - are interdependent. They cannot be influenced in isolation. Thus, for example, an individual's social development is dependent throughout his life on what knowledge he has of the world around him. Similarly his pattern of knowledge and orientation to the world around him are largely the result of the expectations and demands placed on him by the society in which he lives.

Instruction can never be so designed as only to touch on one component of the individual's development. Every new piece of knowledge, every learning situation affects his whole personality. Consequently schools cannot limit their responsibility to only one aspect of the pupil's development" (p 78, our translation).

Thus our interpretation of the "overall goals" of the curriculum is neither unique nor particularly controversial. We all want our children to be able to cooperate, to show solidarity and a readiness to help, and so on. Generally it is only when the words are given practical meaning that controversy can arise. It is not common, either, for teachers to shape their lessons directly according to the overall goals set out in the curriculum. As we touched on earlier, there are several obstacles to working along such lines. In a report drawn up for the 1974 Commission on Teacher Education, Svingby (1977) calls for more scope to be given to superiors and subordinates at the local level to make their own interpretations of society's guiding recommendations. The curriculum's overall goals should be regarded as the primary control system of the

school. Svingby calls this "shared control" ("gemensam styrning"). This entails a development of the school which justifies our calling it a professional organization, since it involves local school actors being given the right to regulate their own behaviour within a given framework. This right (and duty) means that local actors are themselves actively responsible for the "self-renewal" of the school. We disregard in this context Etzioni's quantitative criteria.

What, then, does this involve? Below we shall discuss the import of the concept "self-renewal".

In discussions of projects to change the school, terms such as "the preparedness of the school to renew itself", "the learning capacity of the school", "the capacity of the school for self-renewal", etc, often crop up. The entire decentralization debate in Sweden is ultimately based on whether the school can evolve an ability to renew itself from within. What does this involve? If we read the literature on organizations the matter becomes fairly clear. There there is talk of mechanistic and organic organizations (Burns and Stalker, 1961). The former correspond on the whole to traditional bureaucratic systems, while characteristic of the latter is that control and authority operate via networks rather than hierarchies. The organic view is based on systems theory premises, which also implies, as we have already pointed out, a basic consensus perspective.

Established organization theorists (e.g. Buckley, Schein, Argyris, Rhenman) hold that the necessary condition for a capacity for self-renewal to be created within an organization is that is must develop into an organic organization. Appelquist (1973) writes, for example:

"To meet the demands made in and by a changing world, an organic form of organization is necessary. The organization must be able to renew itself when the terms of its existence change" (our translation).

Appelquist's view is that this means placing such rigorous demands on an organization as that it must

"1. Have the ability to apprehend both internal and external changes,

2. be capable of solving the problems these changes may give rise to,
3. be able to evaluate its attempts to meet these changes and utilize the knowledge such an evaluation provides" (our translation).

He continues:

"The third point implies that it must be possible to regard the organization as self-reflecting. To ascribe a capacity for self-reflection to an organization may appear to be to give it human attributes; this is in fact the case" (our translation).

Svingby (1977) makes reference to the systems theorist Buckley when talking about developing the professional school organization. She believes that organizations which can evolve a high capacity for learning are, to refer to Buckley, characterized for example by "'Feedback mechanisms' between different parts of the organization which allow different kinds of specialized ability to be integrated in new ways" (our translation).

Have those who express themselves in such terms as these decided in favour of a systems approach, then? The question cannot of course be answered unequivocally. As a role questions of this kind are dealt with fairly rarely in educational research.

We do not of course consider it erroneous to talk about the "learning capacity" of the school, and so on, but the important thing is to define what this involves. And our definition should be expressed in terms of the teoretical perspective chosen for the investigation in question.

We believe that the learning capacity of the school, its capacity for self-renewal, etc, must be described in terms of the opportunities superior and subordinate actors have for making their own interpretations of the directional objectives set by society and for acting accordingly. A school with a low capacity for self-renewal may thus contain more obstacles to various goal-directed action, and the converse will apply to a school with a high learning capacity. At some point, however, there is a limit to how far efforts towards educational change can go. This limit is reached when formal and/or informal obstacles exceed the combined capacity of the actors concerned for goal-directed action. In the school world, formal obstacles consist primarily of the rule system,

e.g. rules governing qualification requirements, resources and the allocation of time to subjects. Informal obstacles include above all opposition to changes which emanates from the "culture", i.e. the individuals concerned. The prevailing value system of the "culture" can thus be a very effective brake against changes in educational activity. The value system, for its part, is an expression of the actors' views on society, individuals, knowledge, learning, and so on.

Consequently it is difficult to establish at a theoretical level some generally valid "total scope" for alternative forms of educational activity, since the bounds of such activity can vary considerably from one school to another. It may be possible to form some idea of the "culture" of a particular school by means of interviews, observation, visits to classrooms, etc, and from it draw conclusions as to how "tolerant" the school environment is. In the end, however, the limits can only be determined through action of various kinds.

The conclusion we can draw from the above discussion is that a school with a high capacity for self-renewal exhibits a higher degree of professionalism than one with a low capacity. This conclusion is possible because the necessary condition for a school to develop a high capacity for self-renewal is that within given guidelines it is controlled by the cultural view common to all its actors, this in turn being an expression of the ethical code, or basic attitude, prevailing at the actor level.

4.3 The Bureaucratic Organization

One organizational characteristic of the school is that its structure displays clear bureaucratic features. Several organization theorists have tried to arrive at a uniform definition of bureaucracy. When we use the concept below, we are primarily interested in certain properties which can be said to characterize the school as an organization. These include the following:

"1. a functional division of labor (e.g. the allocation of instrumental and coordinative tasks to the school-system roles of teacher and administrator);

2. the definition of staff roles as offices, that is, in terms of recruitment according to merit and competence, legally based tenure, functional specificity of performance, and universalistic, affectively neutral interaction with clients;

3. the hierarchic ordering of offices, providing an authority structure based on the legally defined and circumscribed power of officers, a system of adjudication of staff disputes by reference to superior, and regularized lines of communication;

4. operation according to rules of procedure, which set limits to the discretionary performance of officers by specifying both the aims and modes of official action" (Bidwell, 1965, 0 974).

The bureaucracy of the school is also linked to a more or less finely meshed system of rules. Arfwedson (1977) summarizes parts of this system as follows:

"a. The subdivision of the school day into work (teaching) periods, with a prescribed distribution among subjects.

b. Directives on class size (the number of pupils allowed before a class must be split, etc) and the minimum number of pupils for a school to be set up ...

c. Directives on the assessment of school activities (e.g. by grades and possibly by centrally distributed tests) ...

d. Directives on the use of centrally produced teaching aids and other equipment and resources ...

e. Directives on economic and other necessary practical frameworks for the activities of the school (e.g. school rules) ...

f. Directives on teachers' teaching loads, other duties, and salaries ... " (our translation)

Behind this rule system, which forms a cornerstone of the structure of the school, we can discern an outlook running directly counter to the total view expressed in the overall goals of the curriculum. These rules imply that reality can be divided up into a great many segments, all clearly demarcated. It is then up to the pupil himself to formulate a total view on the basis of these segments. According to this way of thinking, then, it is possible for pupils to construct a functioning total perspective despite the fact that school subjects are served up higgledy-piggledy with no tangible connection between them. Arfwedson (ibid) suggests that the lack of consistency between the systems of goals and rules can

be explained from a historical point of view. The goals have their origin in liberal-humanist thought, whereas the rule system is founded on a tradition of administrative law, which in turn has its roots in the growth of the public sector.

4.3.1 Hierarchy - Bureaucracy

In the context of a discussion on efficiency in public administration and private enterprise, Sandberg (1973) writes:

"Public administration is intended to pursue politically determined goals. It must adapt to changes in directives from above, and not, like firms 'perfectly' governed by market forces, merely decentralize to meet changes in its environment" (p 99, our translation).

Sandberg continues:

"Another essential difference between the public and private sector is the requirement of legal safeguards in administration, involving inter alia foreseeable decisions, openness to public inspection, impartiality, equality of treatment, and democratic control" (p 99 f, original's italics, our translation).

In the case of the school this means that it must, for example, ultimately be politically controlled, on the basis of ideological considerations. Thus it can never become an "organic" organization in Burns and Stalker's (1961) sense. Because ultimately it is politically governed, and to ensure that the need for legal safeguards can be met, the education system has to have a hierarchical structure. As Sandberg points out, hierarchy involves the risk of bureaucracy, but that does not mean that it necessarily entails bureaucracy in the traditional sense. We believe it is a fundamental, but common, error to equate hierarchy with this form of bureaucracy. The theory of the complex school organization which this report aims to be one step towards must, then, assume that the school has a hierarchical structure. We shall return to this later in the report.

4.3.2 The Dilemma of Bureaucracy

Systems oriented organization theorists, among others, often criticize bureaucratic organizations because their rigid structure constitutes an obstacle to adaptation to their environment. They see them as having a low capacity for adaptation. However, this cannot be seen as a problem for the education system, since control of the school organization must ultimately be a matter of politics rather than of the environment. Nevertheless, one problem common to all bureaucratic organizations - including the school - is, as Sandberg (1973) puts it, that

"(the) negative effects of a formalization and 'tightening up' of the organization's activities seem to lead to more formalization, an intensification of the bureaucratization process. You end up in a vicious circle. Bureaucratic rules tackle the symptoms and make it less necessary to solve the underlying problem" (p 103, our translation).

With this quotation as our starting point, we can go on to look at various "sub-structures" which can be observed within the bureaucratic organization of the school. The sub-structures we shall outline below are:

- the "management" structure
- the service structure
- the pupil welfare structure

4.3.3 The "Management" Structure

As we mentioned earlier, school "managers", i.e. headteachers and deputy heads, are recruited on traditional bureaucratic principles. These are expressed in Swedish school legislation as follows:

"Grounds for promotion to a permanent post as headteacher/deputy head are knowledge, experience and other qualities particularly important for the discharge of the duties of the post" (our translation).

Perhaps more interesting in this context is the fact that all heads and deputy heads in Sweden have a background of - generally long and highly competent - teaching experience. As a rule, the primary role of the traditional headteacher is that of mediator - or administrator - of the school's rule system. This means that a headteacher, who is basically

trained for the school's professional system, has to assume the role of a more or less full-fledged bureaucrat. What is more, he or she has to do so without any actual administrative training.

The difficult and vulnerable position of headteachers and deputies in Sweden today is hardly news to the average Swede. If we consider school "management" in the perspective of the school as an organization, their conflict-fraught position becomes somewhat clearer. They are under pressure from different directions. In societal terms, such pressure stems from the frequently arising conflict between educational goals and the rules laid down to govern the school's activities. Seen from another angle, the conflict may be between society's educational objectives, for which the headteacher is responsible as a public servant, and views which are not always compatible with these aims. To take an example: society has prescribed a fully comprehensive system of elementary and secondary education, but various groups of actors at a school may advocate a system of parallel, segregated schools. Finally, if we regard the headteacher's dilemma from an organizational point of view, we find that it derives from a conflict between the professional and bureaucratic organizations. To sum up: as a result of the complexity of the school organization the headteacher's position is both filled with conflict and creates conflict.

4.3.4 The Service Structure

Within the school organization a sub-structure with a marked service character can also be distinguished. It can be regarded as auxiliary to the school's bureaucratic and professional organizations. Thus, for example, there are clerical staff working in the school office, one of their duties being to submit certain information to superior authorities. There are also staff, such as teaching assistants and school librarians, who provide services mainly for the professional organization. Other examples of service staff of this kind are caretakers, cleaners, catering staff, "house parents" and so on. Characteristic of most service staff is that they have no basic training in education whatsoever, and apart from their participation in what is known in Sweden as Staff Team Training ("Personallagsutbildningen", cf. Berg et al, 1980b, English abstract) they are not involved in organized in-service educational training. We can perhaps take this to indicate that service staff are primarily to be as-

signed to the bureaucratic organization of the school.

4.3.5 The Pupil Welfare Structure

The pupil welfare structure of the school can be roughly divided into a "social" and a "physical" side. The former has a relatively short history. The 1946 School Commission (SOU 1948:27) proposed that the teacher's role should be extended from that of a mere communicator of knowledge to include "mental welfare and social duties" (our translation). Furthermore, it was decided that teacher training should include an orientation in the behavioural sciences in order to further this aim. This heavy emphasis on the teacher's social function is preserved in all the curricula of the post-war period in Sweden. Nevertheless, since the Commission's report was published there has been a steady increase in functional specialization. New posts, such as those of the school counsellor, the psychologist and the study and vocational adviser, have come into existence. The only conclusion can be that teachers cannot cope with social duties within their teaching. The physical side of pupil welfare has a considerably longer history. According to the SIA Report (SOU 1974:53), there is mention of a school doctor at a secondary school as early as in the School Ordinance of 1878. The school doctor, however, is a fairly peripheral figure in today's school organization. The school nurse, on the other hand, plays a much more active role, and she (occasionally he) can be said to be something of a link between the "physical" and "social" aspects of pupil welfare.

Another group operating within the school, which has something of an intermediate position between the pupil welfare and professional structures, are teachers concerned with special education. Formally they are primarily part of the professional organization, but in reality they have been entrusted with duties more and more resembling pupil welfare.

It is perhaps particularly interesting to ask what position these functional specialists have in the school organization. Are they bureaucrats or professionals first and foremost? With reference to Downs[1], Sandberg

1) Downs, A. 1967: Inside Bureaucracy. Boston.

carries on a discussion of interest in this context:

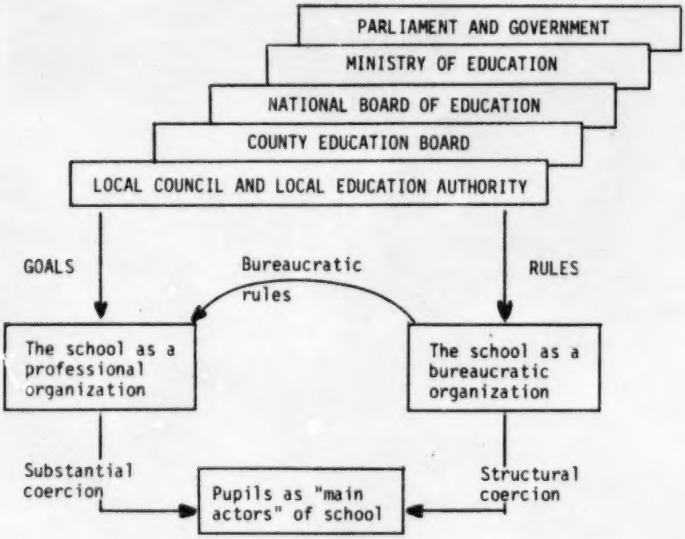
"If an organization ... is given a high priority task to perform, then according to Downs a special unit is often formed with the job of tackling this new task quickly. It communicates directly with the management. Gradually the exceptional concentration of power and knowledge disappears. After a certain time its task is completed; it becomes more dependent on the bureaucracy; new special tasks appear, causing the bureaucracy to concentrate on other specialist organizations. The organization continues to grow" (p 103, our translation).

Downs' arguments seem applicable to the welfare structure of the school. A study by Lundén and Näsman (1980) suggests that pupil welfare workers have on the whole got stuck in a bureaucratic rut, defining problems in terms of the ready-made "solutions" which schools currently have to offer. Pupils are diagnosed in standard terms (e.g. poor concentration, discipline problems, unhappy home backgrounds) and then the corresponding "solutions" are applied. The assumption, in other words, is that there is something wrong with the pupil, not with the school. If pupil welfare work was more professionally oriented, the pupil would be diagnosed in terms of his or her total situation and various feasible measures - or "solutions" - would be taken on this basis. For it to be possible to follow these principles, a flexible, non-bureaucratic organization would be required.

We would stress that the conclusions set out above are preliminary, and that we hope to be able to shed more light on these questions in the course of further research.

4.4 Summary

The content of this chapter can be summarized in the following diagram, which is a development of the figure on p 30.



Pupils are recruited to the school by means of a formal compulsion to attend (= structural coercion). At school they are then ordered in a certain bureaucratic pattern (classes, timetables etc). The bureaucratic school organization is governed by rules determined mainly at various levels above the local school unit. These rules then in turn shape the processes which occur within the professional activity of the school, i.e. teaching and pupil welfare work. In addition to these rules, the goals of the school also operate as controlling factors, and, in line with our earlier arguments, the more these goals are regarded as essential controlling factors by the school staff, the higher the latter's degree of professionalism. The degree of professionalism also affects the substantial coercion which the staff subject the pupils to. By substantial coercion we mean, for example, the obligation to submit to certain predetermined teaching in certain sequences, at specified times, and so on.

5 A RATIONALIST VIEW OF THE SCHOOL ORGANIZATION

5.1 Introduction

In earlier chapters we underlined the need for an organizational theory of the school to take into account the school's hierarchical structure and structural conflict. Accepting these initial assumptions would seem to exclude a systems approach to an organizational theory of the school, since systems theory relies on the organization being characterized (a) by networks rather than hierarchy and (b) by some form of underlying consensus on what basic tasks the organization is to perform. Since the school does not satisfy these requirements we must reject systems theory in this context.

In this chapter we shall attempt to suggest the outlines of an organizational theory of the school which matches up to the criteria we have discussed and which encompasses the conceptual framework we have examined. At the end of the chapter we shall consider the concept "shared control" and discuss how schools can be changed on this basis.

5.2 A Rationalist Perspective

We have already decided against a conventional systems approach. To illustrate the basic elements of another perspective - the rationalist approach - we can quote Abrahamsson (1975):

"The rationalist approach has two characteristic features. Firstly, the organization's activities are regarded as a function of goals set by some individual or group of individuals (the 'principal' of the organization). A second assumption is that the person or persons entrusted with putting these goals into practice are capable of drawing up an inventory of alternative methods of attaining the organization's goals; and that the individual has the ability to select adequate means of carrying out the chosen strategy in the most economical way (economical in a broad sense)" (p 87, original's italics, our translation).

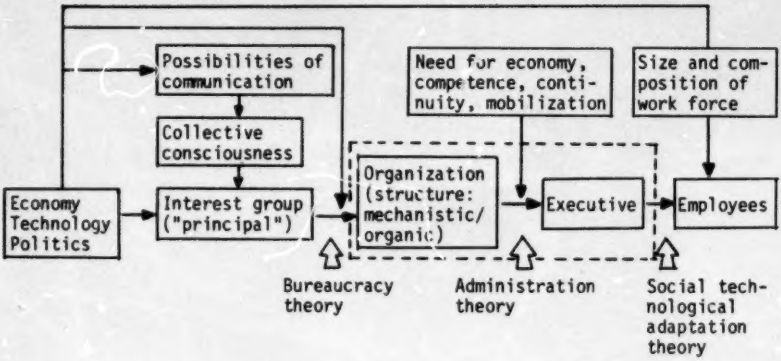
The rational model does not, in other words, assume that phenomena and events within a particular system are organically "natural" processes. Rather it assumes that they are ultimately determined by certain groups who for various reasons wish to have certain tasks performed.

Rational organization theory has predecessors in Taylor and Weber and is often associated with the principles they proposed. As Abrahamsson points out, this means that the mechanical view of the individual associated with the organizational principles of Taylorism has also come to dominate the rationalist approach. Without any doubt this has given the concept of rationalism a bad name in this context. Weber's bureaucratic "ideal types" are another characteristic of rationalism to have taken on controversial implications. They imply, for example, that employees are personally free and only observe the impersonal duties laid down in their job descriptions. The idea behind these ideal types was not, however, to prescribe patterns of behaviour in ideal bureaucratic structures, but rather, as Abrahamsson puts it, to create a "kind of yardstick, against which different empirical cases can be contrasted" (p 88, our translation).

It would seem reasonable to claim that the rational model is tacitly founded on a perspective of conflict. The basic assumption of rationalism is that individuals have different goals and that these goals may be - and often are - incompatible with those of the organization. To induce the individual to work according to organizational goals, it may be necessary to have a highly developed ends/means system and connected control mechanisms, for example. The assumption then is that human goals are in conflict with organizational goals. If this were not the case rules involving direct control and the like would of course be entirely superfluous. The rule system is the "principal's" guarantee that the organization will work in the direction he desires. Such stereotype rationalist thinking leads inevitably to bureaucracy in the traditional sense. Human relations standpoints on "informal organizations" are of little relevance in this context, since the rule system is deliberately "fine-meshed" so as to prevent an informal organization from even coming into existence.

A rationalist approach need not be as rigid as this, however. Formal organization, hierarchies of means and ends, and other traditional characteristics of this approach are merely means used to maximize the efficiency of this kind of organization. It is possible to retain the basic rationalist outlook but find other, more suitable means.

Abrahamsson has evolved a model founded on rational principles, but differing markedly in other respects from traditional models of bureaucracy:



(Our translation)

We shall not explain this model in detail but just touch on its major components.

Abrahamsson writes that

"Organization theory can only be subjective within the scope defined by these (material) factors; and there are numerous suggestions, with varying degrees of materialistic determinism, as to how wide this scope is" (p 120, our translation).

Subjective rationalism, then, is limited by various material circumstances describable according to Abrahamsson in terms of economic, technological and political factors:

"Economic factors are connected with the availability to the organization of land, capital and labour; technological with the level of development of the productive forces, i.e. the efficiency of machinery, means of communication and so on necessary for the day-to-day operations of the organization; and political with the organization's relationship to and dependence on the Government and other dominant power groupings (a dependence often formalized in legislation)" (p 120, our translation).

Abrahamsson's discussion is thus akin to our earlier argument that underlying social factors ultimately regulate the freedom of action available and thus place limits on what is permissible.

According to Abrahamsson's model an organization is established by some interest group - the "principal" - creating it to promote its interests. The organization's executive organ consists of one or more executive functions whose job it is to implement the intentions of the "principal". Abrahamsson goes on to discuss three different theoretical levels within this rationalist approach: bureaucracy theory, which has to do with the relationship between "principal" and executive; administration theory, which encompasses the control of the organization's production; and finally social technological adaptation theory, which concerns the commitment of employees to the organization's activities.

To sum up: even if Abrahamsson's argumentation needs clarification on some points (e.g. how an organic organization can be possible within a rationalist approach), his model is closely akin to our earlier discussion on the school as an organization. In our view, a rationalist organizational approach satisfies our basic requirements for a theory of the school as an organization. They were that it should take into account the fact that

1. the school is, and has to be, a hierarchical organization;
2. the school is, and has to be, an organization characterized at all levels by structural conflict.

Thus both these criteria can in our opinion easily be accommodated by a rationalist approach.

Below we shall attempt to link up this rationalist theoretical approach with the phenomena characterizing the school as an organization.

5.3 The School as a Rational Organization

We believe, then, that the rational model Abrahamsson describes satisfies our fundamental criteria for a theory of the school as an organization. It would in other words be possible to describe the school organization in rationalist terms. That does not mean, however, that we can accept Abrahamsson's model uncritically. There are numerous features peculiar to the school as opposed to other types of organization, and this must of course leave its mark on the organizational model of the school

which we evolve. To start with, though, we shall take a look at the similarities that do exist with Abrahamsson's model.

The "principal" of the school is society, which has created the school in order, for example, to introduce young people to its prevailing value system. In this case the "principal" does not represent one unified and unequivocal objective, and can therefore only express its will in vague terms. So it is primarily up to the executive organization to interpret these vague objectives. In the Swedish education system there are at least four executive levels: the National Board of Education, County Education Boards, Local Education Authorities and Administrations, and local headteachers. These are thus society's guarantees that the school will function in accordance with current objectives. The question is whether the most marked bureaucratic structure within the education system is not to be found in the relationship between these different executive levels rather than in schools themselves.

One important task incumbent on the executives, then, is to interpret society's intentions. Basically this involves each executive level progressively restricting the freedom of action of the next level down as a result of its interpretations. The interesting thing is that what these executives primarily interpret are rules governing school activities. There is little evidence of their interpreting educational goals to any great extent.

This has the consequence that by the time the rules have finally filtered down to the school themselves, they have taken on a more or less directly controlling character, leaving little or no scope for interpretation by local school actors. At the same time, the goal system of the school reaches the local school unit in a more or less uninterpreted state. Thus it is basically up to the individual teacher to transform society's vaguely expressed educational objectives into concrete teaching. And this has to be done within the confines of a detailed rule system. It would seem reasonable, then, to describe the executive organization of the school in more or less purely bureaucratic terms. That is to say, there is little in the way of professionalism built into it, and as a result the teachers in this compact bureaucratic structure find it difficult to assert their professionalism.

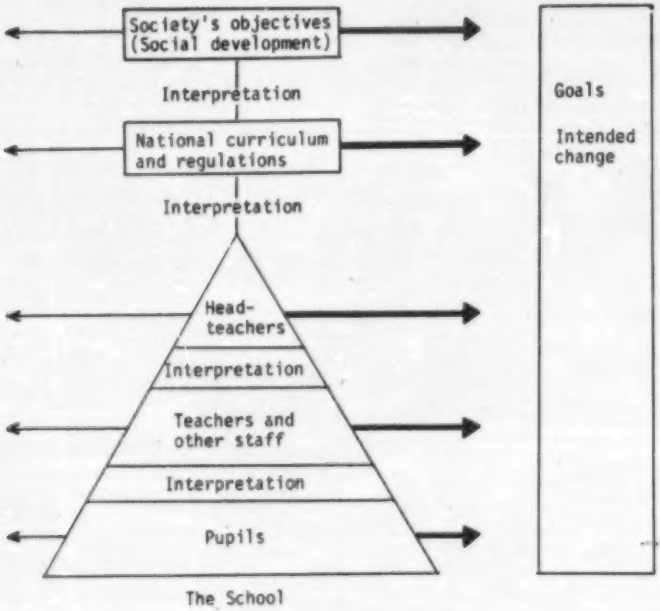
A theory of the school built up on rationalist assumptions must of course also take into account the pupils, since when all is said and done it is for their sakes that schools exist - and not vice versa. Earlier we discussed the pupils in terms of the school as a coercive organization. A prerequisite for pupils to be able to play a part in the planning of, and share in the responsibility for, their lessons is that they have a positive involvement in their schoolwork. This commitment must, however, be seen in the light of the fact that ultimately pupils attend school because of an obligation rather than a voluntary undertaking.

Without pursuing discussion on this point any further, we would suggest that the conceptual apparatus proposed in the previous chapter for analysing and describing the school and school phenomena is compatible with the basic rationalist model of the school as an organization examined here with reference to Abrahamsson. It has been used in other contexts (Fahlgren et al, 1978; Berg et al, 1980a; Berg et al, 1980b; Berg and Englund, 1980) as a basis for analysing current attempts at school reform and there it has proved serviceable.

The reasons we gave in the introduction to this report for working on a theory of the school as an organization included the fact that it could provide a starting point for a discussion of school administration and management. In the next section we shall use the concept "shared control" to shed more light on our theoretical model with reference to these two reasons for our work in this field.

5.4 Rationalism and Shared Control

We have already referred a number of times to the concept "shared control" discussed by Svingby (1977). This involves superiors and subordinates at different levels of the school system being given greater scope for interpreting the goals and guidelines laid down by society. It refers in other words primarily to the goal system or educational system. In her doctoral thesis (1978), Svingby illustrates this interpretive process by what she calls a "conflict model":



(Our translation)

This model corresponds to our basic discussion in this report, in that:

1. it illustrates the hierarchical and conflict-fraught structure of the school
2. it has a clearly rationalistic character.

Shared control means that superiors and subordinates at different levels of the school system themselves interpret the goals and guidelines given by society and act accordingly. This interpretive process can be regarded as a form of negotiation. Negotiation presupposes that there are negotiating parties, and for actors at different levels to be able to participate in the interpretive process they must organize themselves into interest groups of one kind or another. To ensure meaningful and constructive negotiations, those taking part must have a basic knowledge of the school as an organization. Such knowledge can be described at two levels:

1. Knowledge of the school as a rational organization. This means insight into the relationship between "principal", executive, employees and pupils, which in turn implies insight into what forces ultimately restrict the available freedom of action.
2. Knowledge of the phenomena constituting the organization of the local school unit. We have attempted to describe some of these phenomena in terms of the coercive recruitment of pupils, professionalism, and bureaucracy.

Via a sound knowledge of the school as an organization the conditions can be created for implementing shared control.

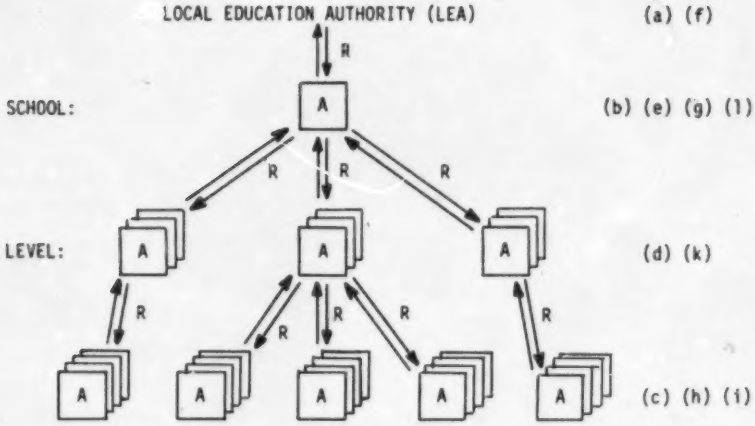
If the development of the school's activity is to be shaped by negotiation, the parties must form some kind of idea about the size of the available scope for action. Basically its extent can only be clarified by educational experience, i.e. practical experiments with alternative educational approaches. Thus a system of shared control could serve as an encouragement to teachers, other staff, and pupils to try out different educational alternatives. It would indicate the limits and provide a more differentiated picture of the available freedom of action. Thus the whole school would benefit from a few trying out alternative procedures. Clarifying the limits would create a basis for discussing the possibility of changing them, a change which basically has to be related to the fundamental tasks of the school and its functions in society. In conclusion, a properly functioning system of shared control can create a school with an autonomous capacity for self-renewal, i.e. an ability to move closer to the bounds of the permissible.

A system of shared control in this form calls for rules governing negotiation and governing the observance of negotiated deals. The results of negotiation can be embodied in a contract between the parties. This allows for arbitration should the need arise. Fahlgren et al (1978) suggest that an institutional board could be set up within each headteacher's "district", including representatives of the political parties on the local council. It would seem reasonable, should the parties to a negotiation be unable to agree on the orientation of the school, to refer the matter to these politicians in the first instance and to the local education authority in the second.

Negotiation about the orientation and structuring of activities, is foreign to the school. And we shall not pursue the parallel any further, either, though we would stress that within the wider framework of shared control the concept of negotiation does have advantages. It indicates that interpretations of goals (and rules) are made from different points of view at different levels of the school system and likewise within particular levels, e.g. in a municipality or at a school. If the school's activities are planned within a framework of negotiation, the need for knowledge of the school and the limits on its activities is all the greater, as we pointed out above. While giving scope to teachers' - and headteachers' and deputies' - professionalism, shared control will also mark the bounds of this professionalism in the light of the limitations laid down by society.

Although the diagram and arguments based on Svingby's work concern what we have termed the goal system, they apply theoretically just as much to the rule system. This is particularly true in the light of the moves towards decentralized decision making currently afoot in the Swedish education system. One expression of this is the proposal of the new Comprehensive School Curriculum (1980) for work plans to be drawn up locally. These work plans can be regarded as the result of deliberations and decisions describable in terms of negotiation.

A consequence of accepting the school as a hierarchical organization and striving for a form a shared control will be that not only will contacts between different levels of the hierarchy increase, but they will also be different in nature from those currently existing. The possible implications at municipality level can be illustrated by a model of local development planning and evaluation taken from Fahlgren e' al:



A = activity plan

R = specification of requirements with regard to lesson time, syllabuses, timetables, staff schedules etc

The following explanation of this model is given:

"Activity planning and evaluation at a school might for example take place as follows:

(a) In addition to the instructions of the national curriculum, the LEA presents each school with a 'policy statement' concerning the orientation of school activities and their development in the long and short term in the municipality (priorities, approaches to problem solving, etc).

(b) The executive organ of the school (i.e. its headteacher and deputy head) discuss the significance of this policy statement for their own school, and it is then passed on - possibly with certain clarifications or additions - to the staff and pupils of the school. At the same time the expected resource allocation of the school is indicated.

(c) On the basis of the curriculum, local policy guidelines and their own assessment - based on an evaluation of the previous year's work - staff and pupils within each work unit describe in outline what they wish to achieve in the coming school year - and in the longer term - in the way of, for example

- knowledge (in general or for particular groups)
- the pupils' general development
- relations and cooperation within the adult group
- solutions to problems regarded as particularly pressing
- questions of school working conditions.

Within the work unit - at least at the senior level[1] - an overall assessment of aims is carried out: What part do different subjects play in the totality the pupil encounters (should encounter) in his schoolwork? Is use made of the opportunities for overlapping between subjects and parts of subjects? 'Are we pulling in the same direction?' How does the work unit's programme look from the pupils' point of view?

A description of the orientation of work within the work unit constitutes the first part of the activity plan. In addition it is assumed that the plan will give an account of the teaching organization which the work unit intends - within available resources - to draw on so as to be able to work along the lines indicated. This account in turn provides a basis for assessing resource requirements (to be taken from back-up resources and local authority 'pool' resources).

(d) Within each level (or school unit) the different work units' activity plans are weighed together. At this point an appraisal of the overall impression of these combined plans can be made: What total picture of three years' school attendance do they present seen from the pupils' point of view? Is there continuity? With what outcome have problems described in previous activity plans been tackled? Have adjacent levels changed in such a way as to necessitate changes within our own level? Can the teaching organization the work units recommend be realized? Are the resource requirements of the level, as expressed in all the plans combined, reasonable in the light of the total resources the school expects to have at its disposal? And so on.

(e) The different levels' activity plans are combined for the whole school. Here both the long and short term development they express and the organizational and resource requirements they involve are discussed: Do the plans express a coherent programme for the school as a whole, in harmony with the objectives embodied in the curriculum and the guidelines laid down by the LEA? Is there continuity from one level to the next? Are there conflicts, e.g. regarding goals, built into the programme? What shortcomings does it have? What problems are in most urgent need of solution? And so on. Is the school prepared for the changes the programme entails? What can be done to make it better prepared? What are our experiences of the changes and the methods of tackling problems suggested in the previous year's activity plan?

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1) The Swedish 9-year compulsory comprehensive school (grundskolan) is divided into three levels, junior (1st - 3rd years), middle (4th - 6th) and senior (7th - 9th).

What do the activity plans' proposals call for with regard to

- resources (back-up resources, financial resources generally)?
- the organization of the school as a whole?
- the planning of in-service training and staff meetings?
- resources for and forms of planning?

Thus the activity plans also provide a basis on which the school can apply for allocations of back-up resources from the LEA and possibly the County Education Board, in both the one-year and the longer perspective. At the same time they can be used as a basis for planning certain types of in-service training.

(f) On the basis of individual schools' activity plans, the LEA decides on resource allocation and 'pool' grants to the schools (or headteachers' 'districts') and may where relevant give various instructions regarding in-service training.

(g) Within each school/headteacher's 'district', resources and grants are allocated to the next level down - the school unit or level - by a decision of the executive organ of the school. The latter also makes decisions on other general arrangements (organization, distribution of teaching loads, timetables, allocation of lessons to subjects, room allocations, etc) and general decisions on local in-service training (emphasis, timetabling, etc). Each level (or corresponding) is allocated resources and informed of decisions on other arrangements in as general terms as possible. Other decisions are worded as generally as possible to allow for viewpoints and independent decision making within each work unit and its working parties (the 'package-deal' principle).

(h) Within the work unit and its separate working parties the final allocation of back-up and financial resources is carried out - on the basis of the activity plan drawn up earlier (c). Here a direct involvement of pupils is both important and natural. The teaching organization which the work unit described earlier is worked out in detail (allocation of teachers, detailed timetable, grouping into sets, etc). Finally the activity plan is specified with regard to activities during the school year (project studies, inter-subject cooperation, educational visits, contact with the local community, etc).

(i-l) Throughout the school year the activity plan is used in the work units (i), in levels and school units (k) and for the whole school (in the overall executive organ of the school) (l) as a basis for evaluating activities and making adjustments and additions, in conjunction with staff meetings, pupil/staff subject meetings, level meetings, class meetings, local in-service training courses, and so on. In the spring term this evaluation work becomes more concentrated in connection with the commencement of activity planning for the following school year - and for the longer term. 'Old' activity plans thus combine with the experiences they have given rise to and with new assessments made to form a central working basis when the process described in (a) - (h) continues and is repeated" (pp 239-242, our translation).

The basic structure of this model is hierarchical and rationalistic in character. Furthermore, the model can be said to be founded on principles of "shared control". However, methods of putting it into practice are not dealt with. The negotiation model which we have outlined in this report under the influence of Dahrendorf (1959) could well prove serviceable when these thoughts on activity planning and evaluation are to be tried out in practice.

On the basis of the organizational view of the school which we advocate, we can study current attempts to change the school in a way which leads to increased understanding and knowledge. It is also possible, for example in relation to the concept "shared control", to venture more normative statements about strategies of change. Thus it follows from the hierarchical model we propose that all those involved in the school's activities at different levels must participate in the work of change. This applies, for example, to individual schools, where all actors should be given an opportunity to participate in some way. The actors' knowledge of the school and its functions in society plays a central part in the control model we have outlined. This has consequences for both basic and in-service teacher training.

Shared control of the hierarchical organization has various consequences for school administrations and headteachers. On the one hand it becomes clear that headteachers and the various levels of school administrations will have to devote more attention to the goal system of the school. Headteachers, too, will have to do their job in a more professional educational manner. The relationship between professionalism and bureaucracy will be altered. And secondly we would point out the consequences for the work of curriculum development. This work will not only become continuous ("rolling curriculum"); it will also need to differ both in form and content from what it currently involves. In addition, the system of control we have discussed may necessitate a change in both the form and content of the curricula themselves. For instance, it is conceivable that different versions - with a common basis - will have to be drawn up for different levels of the hierarchy to guide the work of interpreting goals and rules and planning activities.

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